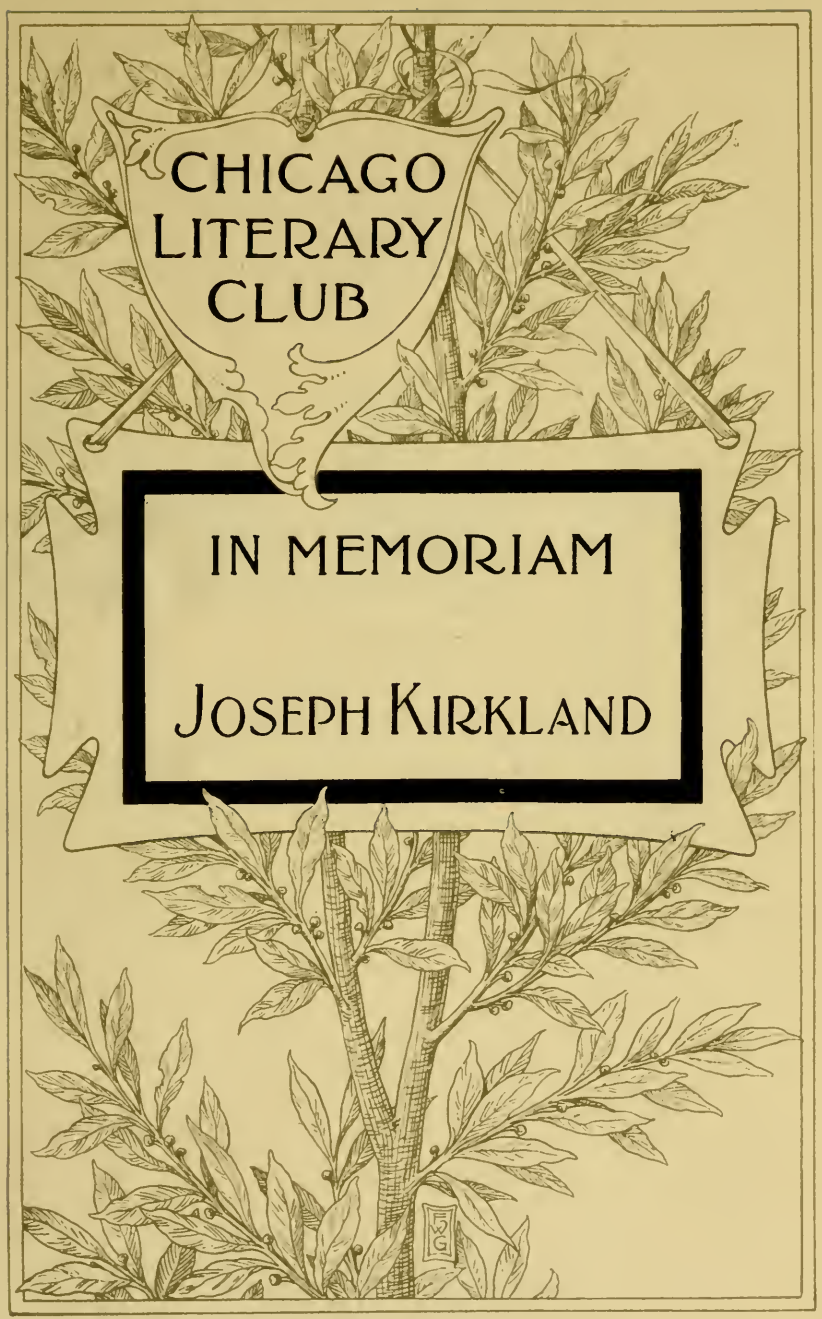

CHICAGO
LITERARY
CLUB
IN MEMORIAM
JOSEPH KIRKLAND



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IN MEMORIAM

JOSEPH KIRKLAND

BORN JANUARY 7, 1830

DIED APRIL 29, 1894

CHICAGO LITERARY CLUB

1894

THIS Memorial of our late fellow-member, JOSEPH KIRKLAND, was read at the meeting of the Club on Monday evening, May 28, 1894, and ordered printed and copies sent to the members of the Club.

FREDERICK W. GOOKIN,
Recording Secretary.

JOSEPH KIRKLAND.

As one by one the members of this Club pass from life, there is no more becoming ceremony than that which commemorates the loss we sustain in the departure from our circle of a worthy member.

Joseph Kirkland is the latest loss we have been called upon to mourn. He was born in Geneva, New York, January 7th, 1830, of a family distinguished on his father's side in the history of the country and of his native State, tracing descent from the pilgrims of Plymouth and other notable ancestors. His mother was a woman well known in the literary annals of the century. His father died in 1846, and it was from his mother chiefly, as we learn from his own statements, that he obtained his education.

In 1856 he removed to Chicago, which was his home until he died, with the exception of time spent in the army during the Rebellion and at Danville, Illinois, while engaged in coal mining operations in that neighborhood.

His service in the army was from the date of the call for three-months troops until the retirement of General Fitz-John Porter, of whose military family he was a member. He served with credit in the West Virginia campaign, the campaign of the Army of the Potomac on the Peninsula, the campaigns of the Second Bull Run and Antietam, as Second Lieutenant of Infantry, Captain and Major on staff duty as Aide to Generals George B. McClellan and Fitz-John Porter.

His subsequent life was spent in coal mining business until 1874, in the Revenue Service of the United States until 1880,—when at the age of fifty he was admitted to the Bar of this State, graduating first in his class at the Law School, and practicing as an attorney until 1890.

Major Kirkland's reputation, however, rests especially on his literary work. In 1885 he published his first novel, "Zury, the Meanest Man in Spring County," and at once took high rank as a novelist, which he justified by two later works, "The McVeys," published in 1887, and "The Captain of Company K" in 1889. He contributed noteworthy articles on "The Poor of Chicago" to Scrib-

ner's Magazine, on "Nicaragua" to Peterson's Magazine, and on "The Chicago Fire" to the New England Magazine; and he is also the author of two histories of Chicago, one of which, together with a second volume of the other, is yet unpublished; and for two years he was the Literary Editor of the Chicago Tribune. His contributions to this Club have been many, and his appearance as an essayist was always welcomed by a large attendance.

His death was to his many friends sudden and unlooked for. It is needless to attempt to draw the character of our departed friend. Few men are able to receive into the fold of their sympathy so many persons coming from such diverse positions in life. He had warm friends amongst the highest and the lowest. His heart was tender to the lowliest of God's creatures. Cruelty to an animal, even when under the name of scientific inquiry it was attempted to be justified by the name of vivisection, was as abhorrent to him as cruelty to a child or a woman is to most men. He made it a matter of principle always to have a genial word of greeting for everyone he knew, from the poorest workingman to the

most prominent citizen; and what to his intimate friends appeared one of his most charming traits and one eminently noticeable on account of its general rarity, was his absolute freedom from rancor. The sun never set on his wrath. His greeting and, what was more, his feeling, towards one on the morning following some business dispute or difference, trifling or otherwise, was as pleasant as though no cloud had arisen.

We all knew and loved and respected him. Indeed, it would be hard to find anyone who was his enemy. His kindness of disposition rendered it impossible for those who met him to be other than his friends, and while kindly and genial, sympathetic and a staunch friend, his morality was above question and his honor never sullied in word or deed. He was a true gentleman, without fear and without reproach.

DAVID SWING,
WILLIAM ELIOT FURNESS,
JOSEPH L. SILSBEE,
ALEXANDER A. MCCORMICK,
JOHN G. SHORTALL,
Committee.

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